

# How to Clean Your AeroGarden™ Pump

## A Clean Pump Helps Keep Your Garden Healthy and Productive!

### A Note About These Instructions

Cleaning an AeroGarden Pump entails disassembling a portion of your AeroGarden, taking apart the *Pump*, cleaning all the *Pump Parts*, and then putting the *Pump* back together.

We realize that not everyone is comfortable diving into the inside of an AeroGarden. If you are wary about taking your *Pump* apart, or get stuck anywhere during the process, please call Customer Service to discuss options for replacing your *Pump*.

### Why Clean Your Pump

A clean *Pump* really does help keep your garden healthy and productive. Cleaning removes nutrient residue and/or plant roots that can clog your *Pump* and prevent the flow of water and nutrients to your plants. It also reduces *Pump* noise.

### When To Clean Your Pump

We recommend that you clean your AeroGarden *Pump* after every Garden has reached the end of its life. This will ensure that nutrients and/or plant roots do not clog the water flow in your next Garden. The most convenient time to clean the *Pump* is during the “**Prepare for Your Next Garden**” cleaning steps, which can be found in the back of any *Seed/Plant Kit Guide*.

In some instances, a planted AeroGarden may start to make noise. This can be a sign of residue build-up inside the *Pump*. If this occurs, we recommend cleaning the *Pump* at the time you notice the noise. This will not harm your plants.

### Supplies Needed:

- Small flat-head screwdriver
- Small pliers or tweezers (*optional*)
- Butter knife
- Sink with hot water
- Dish soap
- Towel (*optional*)
- Extra AeroGarden *Filters*

### Additional Supplies for a Planted Garden:

- Shallow dish (such as baking pan)
- 1 Gallon container (such as a bucket, large bowl or cooking pot)

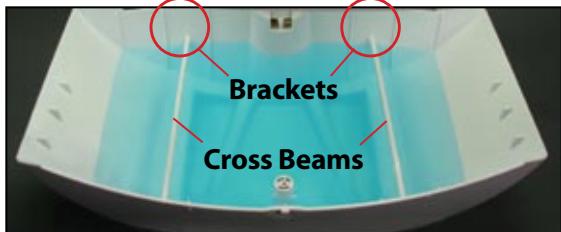
### Time Needed:

Approximately 20-25 minutes the first time and 15 minutes once familiar with the process

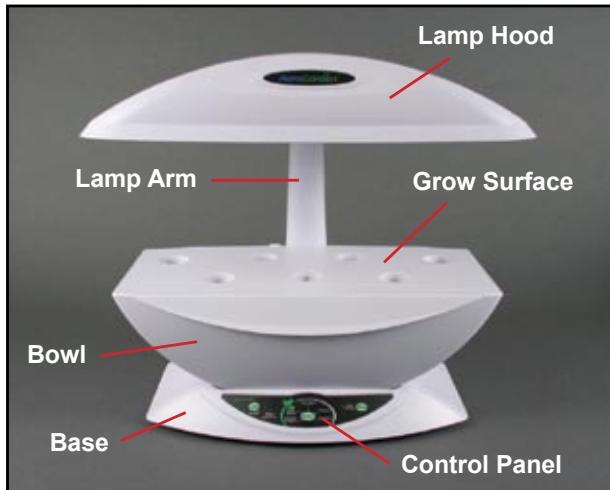
## AeroGarden Components

Please refer to these photos, and the one on page 2, to identify parts referred to in the *Pump Cleaning* instructions.

### Cross Beams & Brackets

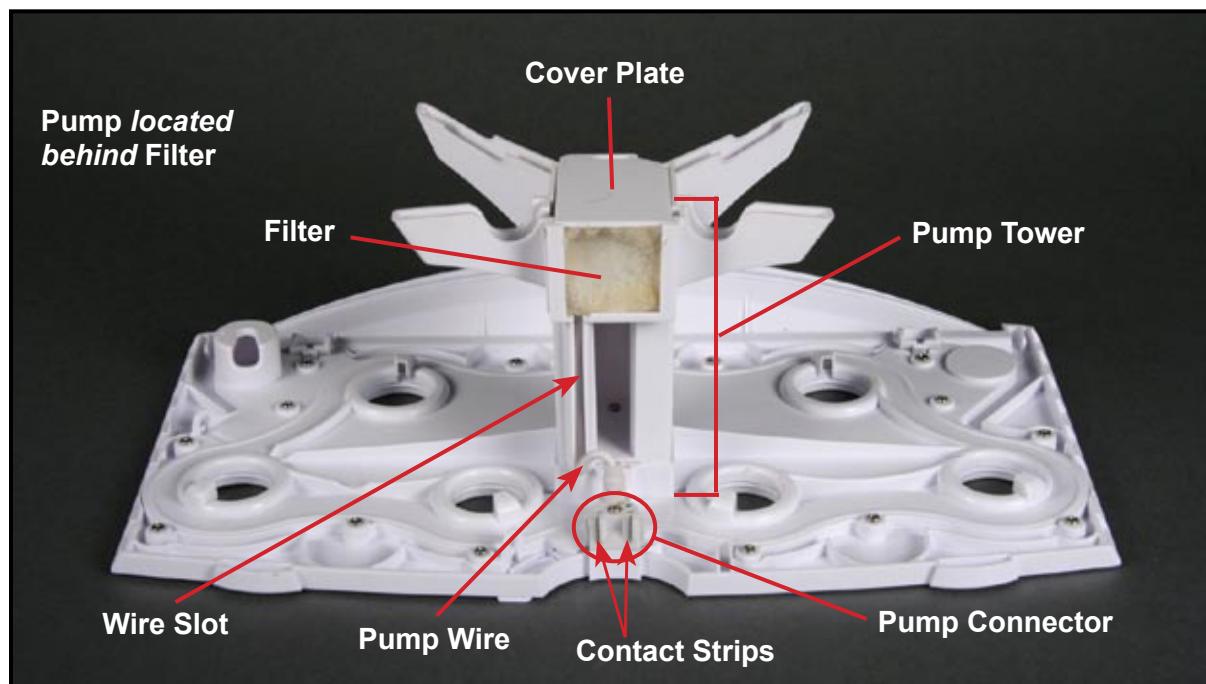


### AeroGarden



## AeroGarden Components (continued)

### Grow Surface (upside down)



### 1 Remove & Save AeroGarden Water & Seed Pods

Skip this step if your AeroGarden is not planted and proceed to Step 2 on page 3.

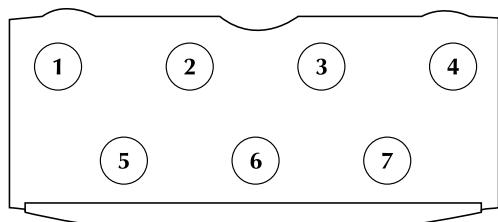
- (A) Unplug your AeroGarden.
- (B) Remove Bowl from Base.
- (C) Remove Grow Surface and place in sink (or on towel) as roots will drip water.
- (D) Pour water from Bowl into shallow dish to a depth of 1".
- (E) Pour remaining water from Bowl into container that holds at least 1 gallon and set aside.
- (F) Gently remove Seed Pods from Grow Surface\* and place plants upright in shallow dish. Be sure roots are in water.



Don't worry if you tear a few roots or if the Cross Beams come out with the roots. Cross Beams can easily be placed back in position (see Troubleshooting for instructions).

\*Use the illustration and corresponding numbered spaces to indicate where Seed Pods are located in the Grow Surface Openings so you can replace them in the same position later.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_



## 2 Remove Pump and Clean Pump Tower

Follow the steps whether your are cleaning a *Pump* from a planted AeroGarden or an empty AeroGarden.

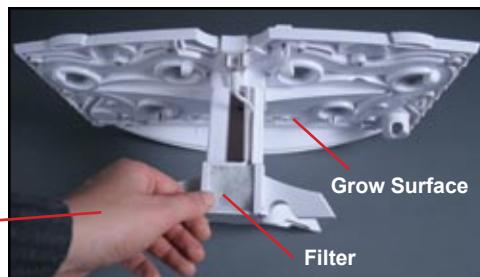
(A) Unplug your AeroGarden.

(B) Remove *Bowl* from *Base*.

(C) Remove *Grow Surface* from *Bowl* and bring to sink or set on towel.

*Hint: Lift the View Door and slide one hand into the Bowl to lift.*

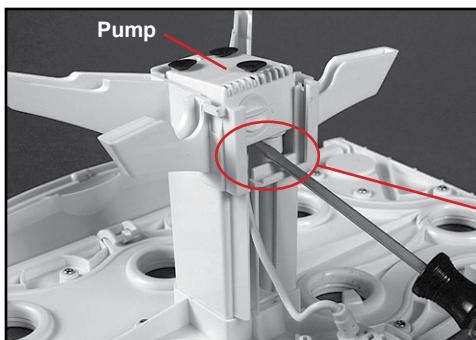
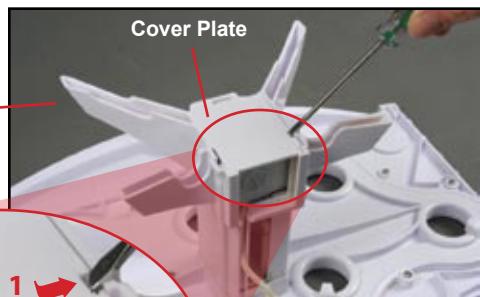
(D) Remove *Filter* from the back of the *Pump Tower* and  
rinse under hot water or discard if you have a new *Filter*.  
(Missing or torn Filter? See Troubleshooting on Page 7.)



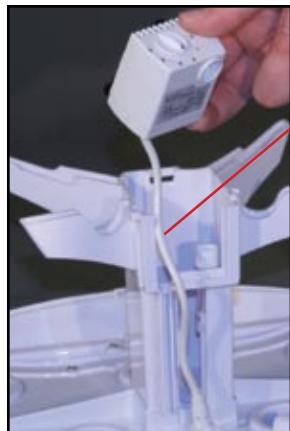
(E) Turn *Grow Surface* upside down and remove *Cover Plate*.

1 Insert flat-head screwdriver at an angle into rectangular slot on right side of *Pump Tower* and gently push down on screwdriver.

2 Repeat step "1" on rectangular slot on left side of *Pump Tower*.



(F) Remove the *Pump* by inserting the flat-head screwdriver into the space under the *Pump*. Push down on the handle of the screwdriver to lift the *Pump* out of the *Pump Tower*.



(G) Pull *Pump Wire* from *Wire Slot* but keep it attached to *Grow Surface*.



(H) Rinse out any residue or roots from *Pump* and *Pump Tower* in sink. It is okay to get everything (the *Pump*, *Pump Wire* and *Grow Surface*) wet.

### 3 Disassemble Pump

With the *Pump* removed from the *Pump Tower*, but still connected to the *Grow Surface*:

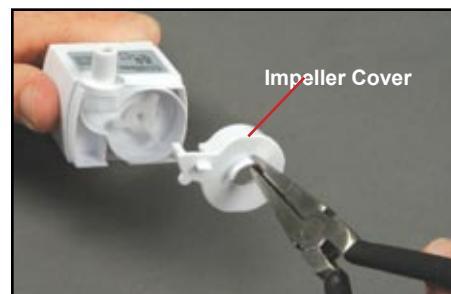
- Ⓐ Use a butter knife to pry off *Face Plate* from *Pump*.

- Place *Pump* on its side on a flat surface.
  - Rest butter knife in the seam between the *Face Plate* and the rest of the *Pump* as shown in picture at right.
  - Tilt the butter knife away from the *Face Plate* and gently pry the *Face Plate* from the *Pump*.
- Hint:* Removing the *Face Plate* requires leverage, not strength. And, don't worry about breaking the *Face Plate* – it is sturdy.
- If necessary, use toothbrush to scrub off residue from *Pump* to ease removal of *Face Plate*.

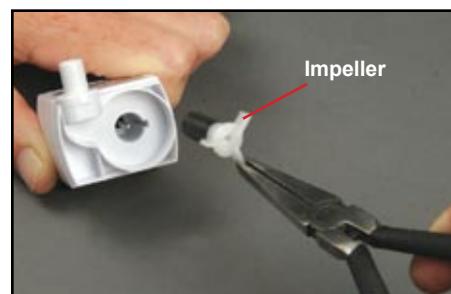
*Don't worry if this piece (or the clear tube) is not attached to your *Pump* when you remove it. Sometimes they come out with the *Pump* and sometimes they remain in the *Pump Tower*. Either location is okay.*



- Ⓑ Remove *Impeller Cover* with small pliers, tweezers or fingers.



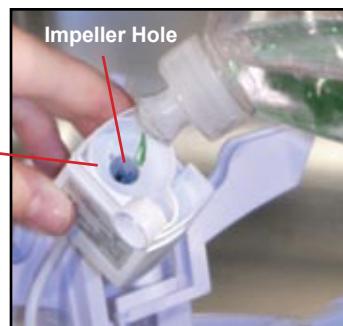
- Ⓒ Remove *Impeller* with small pliers, tweezers or fingers.



### 4 Clean Pump



- Ⓐ Rinse all *Pump Parts* and *Pump* in sink with hot water.
- Ⓑ Put a drop of dish soap (any brand) in the *Impeller Hole*. The soap will be rinsed out later.
- Ⓒ With soap still in *Impeller Hole*, reassemble the *Pump Parts* (*Impeller*, *Impeller Cover* and *Face Plate*).



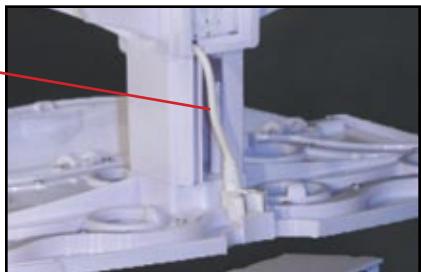
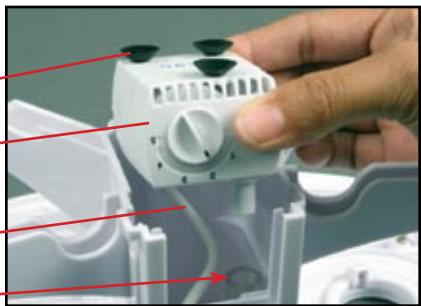
*Continued on next page*

#### 4 Clean Pump (continued)

- D Insert the Pump back into the Pump Tower making sure that:

- The Rubber Feet on the Pump are facing up.
- The Face Plate is facing toward you.
- The Pump Wire goes behind and underneath the Pump.
- Pump is securely seated in the tube in the Pump Tower.
- Pump Wire does not need to go into Wire Slot at this time.

**• Do not put Cover Plate or Filter back in place at this time.**



## IMPORTANT!

#### E Run Dish Soap Through Pump

- Turn Grow Surface right side up and place it in AeroGarden Bowl **without water**. (Yes, without water... just for this step!)  
*NOTE: If Pump falls out, it was improperly seated in the Pump Tower. Please see Step 4D for instructions on proper placement of Pump in Pump Tower.*
- Place Bowl back on Base and plug in AeroGarden. Your Pump will start at this time (listen for a humming sound or put hand on Grow Surface to feel vibration. If your Pump Does Not Start, see Troubleshooting on page 7.)
- Allow Pump to run for 3 minutes and then unplug AeroGarden.



#### F Rinse Dish Soap from Pump & AeroGarden

- Remove Bowl from Base.
- Remove Grow Surface from Bowl and turn Grow Surface upside down.
- Disassemble Pump Parts (see steps 1-3 on page 4).
- Thoroughly rinse all Pump Parts, Pump, Pump Tower and Bowl in sink with hot water until no soap residue remains. **Any remaining soap could harm your plants.**

*If you are cleaning your Pump due to noise, we recommend repeating "Clean Pump" steps 4A-4F for best results.*

- G When you are finished cleaning the Pump, set the Face Plate Dial to "2". (If your Face Plate does not have numbers, set the Dial to the 2 o'clock position, as shown on the black Face Plate at right.)

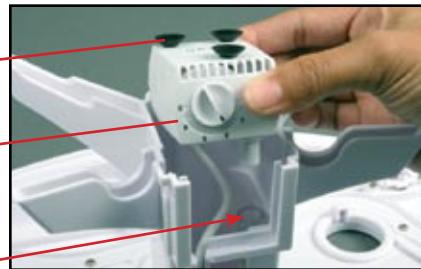
- H Reassemble Pump Parts – Impeller, Impeller Cover and Face Plate.



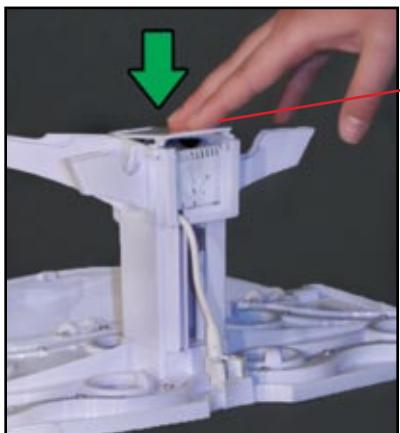
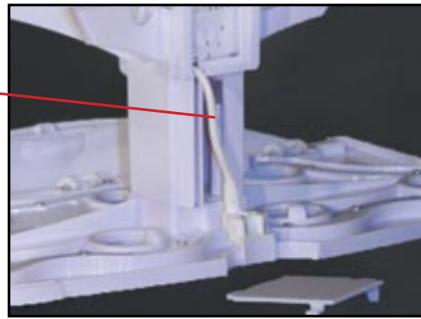
## 5 Reassemble Pump

- Ⓐ With Grow Surface upside down, insert the Pump back into the Pump Tower making sure that:

- The Rubber Feet of the Pump are facing up.
- The Face Plate is facing toward you.
- Pump is securely seated in the tube in the Pump Tower.

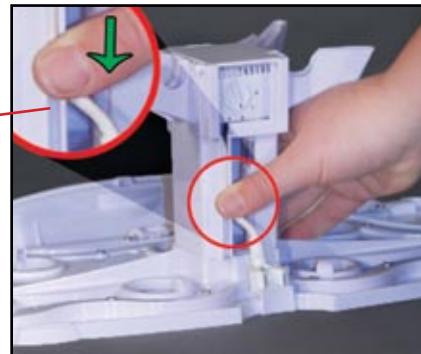


- The Pump Wire goes behind and underneath the Pump, and lines up with Wire Slot.



- Ⓑ Insert Cover Plate in the bottom of the Pump Tower and push down until all corners snap in place.

- Ⓒ Push Pump Wire back in Wire Slot.



- Ⓓ Turn Grow Surface right side up and place clean or new Filter back in slots in front of the Pump. (If you do not have a Filter, please see Troubleshooting on page 6.)

**If you are working with a planted AeroGarden, skip step E (below) and proceed to final steps on page 7.**

- Ⓔ Replace Grow Surface in Bowl\*.

**Congratulations!**

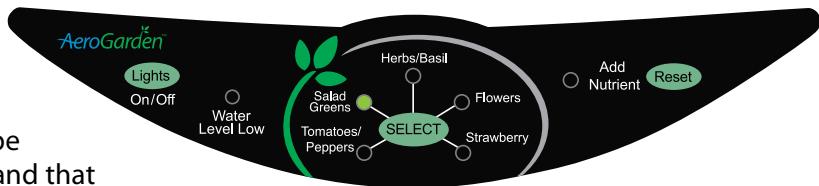
**Your AeroGarden is ready for its next planting!**

\* If you cleaned your Pump to reduce noise, fill the Bowl with water and plug in your AeroGarden. If the Pump is still noisy, please contact Customer Service.

## 6 Replace Water & Seed Pods in AeroGarden

If you have cleaned the *Pump* from a planted AeroGarden, it's now the time to reassemble your planted AeroGarden.

- (A) Turn the *Grow Surface* right side up on a towel or in your sink and replace *Seed Pods* by gently guiding roots into the *Grow Surface Openings*. (Use *Seed Pod placement reference* from page 2.)
- (B) Pour water from the containers (see page 2) back into *Bowl* and, if needed, add fresh water up to "Fill to Here" inside the *Bowl*.
- (C) Place *Grow Surface* in *Bowl* and place *Bowl* on *Base*.
- (D) Plug in AeroGarden and make sure the *Control Panel* is set to the right plant type (*Tomatoes/Peppers*, *Salad Greens*, etc.), and that the *Pump* is working.

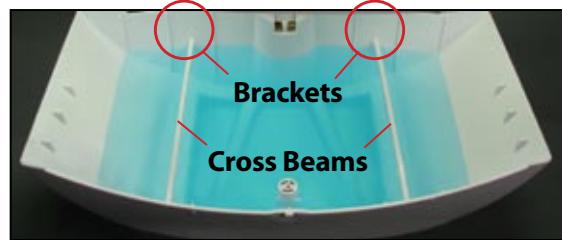


**Congratulations! Enjoy your quiet Garden!** If your Pump is still noisy, please contact Customer Service.

## Troubleshooting

### Cross Beams

Sometimes plant roots get tangled around the *Cross Beams* and pull them out of the *Bowl*. Place *Cross Beams* back into *Brackets* inside *Bowl*. The *Brackets* are on the inner front and back walls of the *Bowl*.



### Missing or Torn Filters

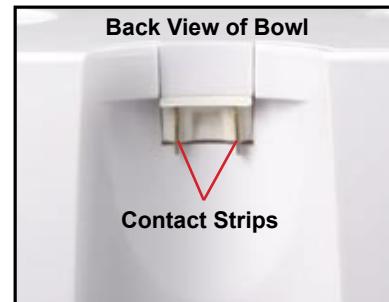
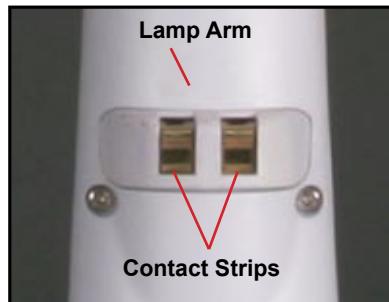
If you have planted more than three *Seed Kits* in your AeroGarden, you may notice the *Filter* has started to degrade. Or, you may have misplaced the *Filter* while cleaning or replanting.

A temporary *Filter* can be made from a green scrubbing pad, like the ones used to scour pots and pans. Be sure the pad is soap-free. Cut a 1-1/2" x 1-5/8" rectangle to use as your temporary *Filter*. New *Pump Filters* can be ordered at [www.aerogardendirect.com](http://www.aerogardendirect.com) or by calling AeroGrow Customer Service at 1-800-476-9669.

### Pump Does Not Start

If the *Pump* does not start, try each of the following:

- Make sure your AeroGarden is plugged into a working wall socket.
- Press down firmly on the *Bowl*, to make sure it is securely seated on the *Base*.
- With AeroGarden unplugged, remove *Bowl* and check the metal *Contact Strips* on *Lamp Arm* and on back of the *Bowl*. If they are corroded, clean them with an old toothbrush and white vinegar.
- The *Pump* is designed to cycle on and off. It may not start because your AeroGarden is in a "Pump-Off" cycle. To set AeroGarden to "Pump-On" cycle, press the "Select" button on the *Control Panel* until you reach "Salad Greens." (If you have an AeroGarden PRO or AeroGarden Deluxe, set it to the 24-Hour Light Cycle.) Be sure to return the *Control Panel* to the correct plant setting after confirming your *Pump* has come on.



**AeroGrow Customer Service**

Mon-Fri: 6am - 7pm, Sat-Sun: 8am - 4pm, Mountain Time

**1-800-476-9669**  
**[www.aerogrow.com](http://www.aerogrow.com)**